



A Note From Joe



There was once a time when summer months were considered off-season in St. Lucie County. A time when those of us in government could catch up on reading or restart projects that languished in tickler files. Those days are over. Our county's rapid growth insists that your commissioners spend additional time understanding the complexities of government in greater detail. In early July, my colleagues and I did just that by completing a week long budget workshop with county staff. After public input, the Board determined that we would continue to invest in our community through various facets including road and sidewalk projects, continued support of law enforcement and criminal justice programs and by bolstering hurricane reserves. All of this will be accomplished and your taxes will be lowered by the largest percentage in known history! Final board adoption of the county budget for fiscal year '06-'07 is set for September 14 at 6:00pm in the BOCC Chambers on 23rd Street. You will have an opportunity to share your comments and concerns. Hope to see you there!

Prescription for SAVINGS!



The next time you go to the pharmacy, you may leave with more money in your pocket thanks to a new Discount Drug Card program in our area. **Every resident in St. Lucie County qualifies** to use the free card, which is sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo.) The cards are accepted at most local pharmacies including Walgreens, CVS, Publix, Walmart and Winn Dixie. The program provides a cost savings of about 20% on average for prescription drugs. You don't even need to apply, all you have to do is pick up a card and you can begin using it immediately. You can also use the card to save on medications for your pet!

"The NACo prescription discount card offers significant savings for the uninsured and underinsured residents of our county, and even those fortunate enough to have prescription coverage can use the card to save money on drugs that are not covered by their health plan," said St. Lucie County Community Services Director Beth Ryder.

You can pick up your **FREE** Discount Drug Card at any of the following locations:

- County offices and libraries
- Health Department locations
- Council on Aging locations
- Local churches

Go to www.stlucieco.gov/community for more information. Pick up your card today and start saving!



Dollars for District 1

Summer is a busy time for St. Lucie County Commissioners. It's the time when they sit down with staff and hash out a budget for the upcoming year. Deliberations over dollars have ended, and all areas of the county fared well during the discussions. Commissioners decided to set aside funding for several major projects in District One:

Angle Road Sidewalks

Money has been earmarked to begin construction on sidewalks along Angle Road. The design phase began earlier this year and should be complete by April 07. Construction of the \$1.5 million sidewalk is expected to get under way next July and should take about four months to complete.

Dan McCarty Track Parking Added

Funds have been set aside to pave the parking lot for the track at Dan McCarty Middle School.

Land for Lincoln Park Rec Center

Commissioners decided to set aside \$500,000 to serve as a match to acquire property near the Lincoln Park Recreation Center for future expansion. They also earmarked \$20,000 to buy a video system for kids who frequent the center.

Drainage and Paving

You may have noticed the major drainage project under way in Paradise Park. Work is scheduled to be complete on phase 1 by the end of the year, and crews will then be moving into Harmony Heights to begin installing drainage in that area. And after years of dealing with dirt roads, Paradise Park residents will soon enjoy paved streets thanks to the Commissioners' decision to fund a paving project there.



Spotlight on: Elementary to K-8

Two schools in our district are undergoing a major change. Research indicates that K-8 model schools offer academic and financial benefits to both the school district and families alike. So St. Lucie County School District officials have decided to implement change in several schools across the county in hopes of providing an even better learning environment for area students. In District One, Chester A. Moore and Garden City Elementary schools are in the process of becoming K-8's. Both schools will have 6th and 7th grade as of this school year, with 8th grade being added next year.

The push for the change stems from research that shows K-8 models provide many more across the grade level instructional opportunities. The setup also allows many families to have their children attend the same school because siblings are afforded priority in making student assignments to schools. Researchers also believe the K-8 model schools foster parental involvement, which typically levels off when students enter middle school.

For more information on schools in our area, you can visit the SLC School District website at www.stlucie.k12.fl.us.



Luke Benjamin Smith

It's a BOY!

Commissioner Smith's Executive Aide, Carin Campbell Smith, and her husband Bryan are proud to announce the birth of their first baby! Luke Benjamin Smith was born April 24, 2006 at Lawnwood Regional Medical Center in Ft. Pierce. He weighed in at 7 pounds, 7 ounces and was 20 inches long. Carin took 5 weeks off to be home with little Luke, but is back at work and enjoying motherhood. Commissioner Smith is happy to have her back! The friendly voice you heard during Carin's absence was that of Ashley Earl. Ashley did a great job filling in and she has since gone off to complete her undergraduate studies at Florida Atlantic University. Good Luck Ashley and thanks so much!

Attainable Housing



Owning a home is a dream for many people. Here in St. Lucie County, the price of that dream has risen dramatically in recent years. One developer is hoping to help solve that dilemma for local residents by building attainable housing. The project currently called "The Preserve" is planned for a plot of land near the intersection of Angle and Metzger Roads. If approved, the new community will consist of about 900 townhomes and condominium apartments, some for sale to potential buyers at a price they are more likely to be able to afford. The plan includes many amenities including parks, recreation areas, a youth soccer field, basketball courts, swimming pools, lakes, sidewalks and walking trails. For more information on the project, you can contact the developer at jlspa1@verizon.net.



Helping Hand after Hurricanes

Four local families are receiving help in rebuilding their homes after hurricanes Frances, Jeanne and Wilma. The District One residents are receiving everything from new windows and hurricane shutters to new roofs and drywall. The work is being funded through the State Housing Initiative Program (SHIP), the HOME Again Program and a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG.) Residents who need assistance must fill out an application and meet the required criteria to qualify. For more information on any of these programs, contact the St. Lucie County Community Services Department at 462-1772 or www.stlucieco.gov/community.

Out and About...



Commissioner Smith remained busy this summer! In between Board meetings, budget hearings and Board workshops, he attended several local events as well as conferences in and out of the state. In June, he attended the Concerned Citizens Forum, spoke to the Caribbean American Cultural Group and presented a proclamation at the San Juan Festival. In July, he attended the Lincoln Park Main Street Forum and headed over to Ft. Myers for the Florida Association of Counties Annual Conference. And this month, he's off to Chicago to attend the National Association of Counties Annual Conference.

Meeting Schedules

County Commission:

6p - 1st/3rd Tues of every month
9a - 2nd/4th Tues of every month
Administration Bldg.
3rd Floor
2300 Virginia Ave

Ft. Pierce City Commission:

7p - 1st/3rd Mon of every month
City Hall
100 North US 1

School Board:

6p - 2nd/4th Tues of every month
School Board Office
4204 Okeechobee Rd.

Lincoln Park Business Assoc.:

7p - 2nd Wed of every month
Willie B. Ellis Police Substation
1220 Avenue D

Important Numbers

Commissioner Joe Smith

(772) 462-1410

carins@stlucieco.gov

Ft. Pierce City Hall

(772) 460-2200

SLC School Board Office

(772) 429-3600

State Representative

Richard Machek

(772) 595-1391

State Senator

Ken Pruitt

(772) 344-1140

Governor Jeb Bush

(850) 488-7146

jeb.bush@myflorida.com

US Representative

Alcee Hastings

(202) 225-1313

US Senator

Bill Nelson

(202) 224-5274

US Senator

Mel Martinez

(202) 224-3041

The White House

(202) 456-1414

Questions or comments about our newsletter?

Do you have an issue you'd like for us to discuss in the next newsletter?

Maybe an event you would like announced to the community?

Call or email Carin:

462-1410 or

carins@stlucieco.gov